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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

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DESP. NO.

837.062

5-1057

FROM : AmEmbassy, Habana

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON

May 10, 1957

REF : Voluntary Labor Report - (Emb Despatch No. 695 - April 16; Emb Tels Nos. 493, 512, 502, 518, 524 of April, 15, 18, 22, 25 and 26 respectively)

24 For Dept. Use Only	ACTION	DEPT.	IN F O	OTHER
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				LAB-5 CIA-15 USA-5 OCB-1

SUBJECT: RECENT INCIDENTS AND DEVELOPMENTS RE FEDERATION OF TELEPHONE WORKERS.

(BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED)

The purpose of this despatch is to present a brief account of three incidents and developments which have a direct relationship to the recent intervention of the Labor Federation of Electric, Gas and Water Plants.

1. Mujal Claims 500 Communists in Electric Plants. On April 27, Eusebio Mujal, Secretary General of the Confederation of Cuban Workers (CTC) told newspapermen at the Ministry of Labor that there are "more than 100,000 secretly organized Communists in Cuba and numerous labor unions have been penetrated by the Red elements". He asserted that there are "about 500 Communists in the electric plants" and "more than 1000" in the COA Bus Company.

Mujal said that the barbers, musicians and cigarmakers unions have "numerous followers of USSR orientations". He added that many Communists can also be found in professional guilds.

Mujal praised Decree 538 which empowers the Labor Ministry to screen all applicants for jobs in public utilities and declared that it was necessary for preventing Communist infiltration in sensitive industries such as public utilities.

Although leaders of the Federations of Electric and Telephone Workers have opposed Decree 538, Mujal has vigorously supported it. Angel Cofiño, ousted leader of the Electric Workers, was particularly strong in his opposition to Decree 538 and its attendant Resolution 51, which he claimed violated Constitutional rights.

2. Efforts to Hold Meetings Thwarted. A large mass meeting of the followers of Angel Cofiño, Vicente Rubiera, Secretary General of the Labor Federation of Telephone Workers, and of Calixto Fernandez of the Federation of Bank Workers, was scheduled for May 5, at the grand stadium of Habana for the purpose of paying "homage" to Cofiño, Rubiera and Fernandez. However, the meeting was cancelled by Government authorities.

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REPORTER

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF
INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

MAY 16 1957

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Desp. No. 750

From Habana

A press item on May 8, in El Mundo said that "through the means of a resolution of the Ministry of Government, signed by Dr. Santiago Rey, a baseball game to be held on the evening of May 7, between the teams of Artemisa and Cubaneleco had been called off."

The press item then said "in spite of the reserve about this matter, it is supposed that Dr. Rey signed this resolution since had had information that the leaders of the telephone, electric plants and bank workers, had bought up about 10,000 tickets for admission for the purpose of interrupting the game to hold a meeting against the Government.

3. Supervisory Personnel Barred from Belonging to Unions. A new decree, signed by President Batista, stipulates that employees of public service companies, especially of the Electric and Gas Company, will not be able to be members of a union if they occupy executive or supervisory positions. The decree applies to department and assistant department heads, section heads, superintendents of lines, engineers, lawyers, doctors, auditors, accountants, foremen, etc. Article 4, of Decree No. 2605 of November 7, 1933 was cited as legal base for the new enactment.

A translation of the decree and comment on it will be forwarded shortly to the Department. (END UNCLASSIFIED)

For the Ambassador:

John F. Correll
John F. Correll
Labor Attaché

Copies: Forward Hecto copies to Mexico City

DECLASSIFICATION DATE 4/28/80

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